

Welcome to *Knowing the Scriptures* Bible Study

It is the goal of Sacred Heart Productions to provide free online Bible Study materials to anyone wishing to know the Word of God. One of the unique aspects of *Knowing the Scriptures* is its adaptability for both group and private study. Everyone is invited to use the materials of this program.

We are a Catholic Bible Study because the Church is “catholic,” and to be *catholic* means to be “universal”: *universal* in our presentation of the Word of God, *universal* in our mission, *universal* in our love and goals. We exist at the service of Christ and His Church.

Did you know that Christians began referring to the Church as “the Catholic Church” before the end of the first century? The Catholic Church of the apostles and their successors is one and the same Church today, proclaiming the same Christ, the same Gospel, the same mysteries of salvation.

The Church herself tells us concerning her identity as *Catholic*: “The word ‘catholic’ means ‘universal,’ in the sense of ‘according to the totality’ or ‘in keeping with the whole.’ The Church is catholic in a double sense: “First, the Church is catholic because Christ is present in her. [In the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch, first-century disciple of St. John the Evangelist:] ‘Where there is Christ Jesus, there is the Catholic Church.’ In her subsists the fullness of Christ’s body united with its head; this implies that she receives from him ‘the fullness of the means of salvation’ which he has willed: correct and complete confession of faith, full sacramental life, and ordained ministry in apostolic succession. The Church was, in this fundamental sense, catholic on the day of Pentecost and will always be so until the day of the Parousia. Secondly, the Church is catholic because she has been sent out by Christ on a mission to the whole of the human race” (CCC 830-31).

By being *catholic* in our mission and identity, Sacred Heart Productions proclaims the fullness of the Christian life *meant for everyone*: we are here at the service of “all mankind,

called by God's grace to salvation" (cf. CCC 836). **For Scripture says: "there is only one God, the Father from whom all things come and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come and through whom we exist" (1 Co 8:6); and, also: "There is one Body, one Spirit, just as one hope is the goal of your calling by God. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, over all, through all and within all" (Ep 4:4-6).**

Knowing the Scriptures Bible Study is a program intended to be used by *anyone* and *everyone* who wants to grow in true knowledge of God and His will for us as revealed in the Person of Christ His Son. **There is nothing to fear in undertaking the work of this program: the Holy Spirit gently guides everyone in perfect love and truth.** And where love and truth are, fear vanishes, as the Word Himself tells us when He declares: "the truth shall set you free" (Jn 8:32); and: "I am the Way; I am Truth and Life" (Jn 14:6); and, also: "God is love . . . In love there is no room for fear . . . and whoever is afraid has not come to perfection in love" (Jn 4:16,18).